

## **Historic, Archive Document**

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# Grey Towers

National Historic Landmark

Home of



*Gifford Pinchot*

## Grey Towers

The home of Gifford Pinchot is one of the most significant cultural resources administered by the Forest Service of The U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Nestled among the Pocono mountains of north-eastern Pennsylvania, Grey Towers commands a magnificent view of Milford and the Delaware River Valley. The French chateausque summer home was designed by Richard Morris Hunt for the James Pinchot family in 1885. Hunt, a family friend and leading American architect, combined his French schooling with the desires of his client to produce a design which symbolized the French heritage of the Pinchots while incorporating local materials.

For the two decades surrounding the turn of the century, the elder Pinchots and their children spent many enjoyable summers at Grey Towers entertaining numerous guests for afternoon teas, dinner parties and outdoor activities. It was on this country estate that Gifford Pinchot, with encouragement from his father James, developed the desire to pursue professional forestry.

Grey Towers served as another important career link for Gifford, when after devoting twenty years to



scientific forestry, he turned his attention toward Pennsylvania politics. Grey Towers became his legal residence, and shortly thereafter he married Cornelia Bryce, an energetic lady from Long Island, New York.

Gifford's longstanding fondness of Grey Towers was complimented by his wife's desire to modernize and improve the home's interior and surrounding landscape. Cornelia transformed the 1880's mansion into a modern home more suited to their active lifestyle. This transformation enlarged the library, created a sitting room, and moved the dining room outdoors.

The Pinchots strongly believed in a blending of structure and landscape. They initiated a design theme to create numerous walkways, patios, gardens and water areas that surrounded the home and two other outbuildings which were constructed between 1920 and 1930. These buildings were appropriately named the Letter Box and Bait Box. The Letter Box served as a political office for Gifford Pinchot, while the Bait Box was used as a playhouse for their son.

Grey Towers and its surroundings are a window to the Pinchot's world.



## A Family Portrait



James Pinchot, the son of a Frenchman, was born and raised in the Pennsylvania hamlet of Milford. His career began as a clerk in a New York City dry goods store; within six years he was a partner in a lucrative wallpaper firm. James became wealthy and took pride in the fact that his means of gaining wealth had created no slums, fouled no rivers, and wasted no valuable resources. Universally admired and respected, he helped establish the American Museum of Natural History, the executive committee for the Statue of Liberty, and the first Model Tenement Association. James was also a mainstay in the American Forestry Association and together with his sons founded and endowed the Yale Forest School. Through this venture a forestry summer camp and field study area was established on the family's Grey Towers estate.

After retiring from business at age 44, James and his wife Mary provided a constant and influential presence in the lives of their three children. Gifford, Antoinette and Amos received all of the benefits wealthy children of the Victorian age were accustomed to. In addition to travels abroad, private tutors and outings in the countryside, the children of James and Mary were surrounded by prominent relatives and associates of the family. As a result of this attention, the young Pinchots developed strong moral and intellectual beliefs.



Antoinette, as the wife of a British diplomat, centered her energies on the social causes of Europe. During World War I she organized and managed the American hospital in Ris Orange, France.



Trained as a lawyer, Amos served as a trustee for the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor and founder and member of the Executive Board of the American Civil Liberties Union.

## Gifford Pinchot: Forester, Conservationist

For half a century Gifford Pinchot was America's leading advocate of environmental conservation. Born to wealth and endowed with imagination and a love of nature, he shared his possessions and his intellect with his fellow citizens in order to make America a better place to live.

It was at Grey Towers that James Pinchot encouraged his son to explore the profession of forestry. After graduation from Yale University, Gifford went abroad to study at L'Ecole Nationale Forestiere in Nancy, France, as formal training in forestry did not yet exist in the United States.

"When I got home at the end of 1890 . . . the nation was obsessed by a fury of development. The American Colossus was fiercely intent on appropriating and exploiting the riches of the richest of all continents." With equal fervor Pinchot set to work. In the next two decades he would raise forestry and conservation of all our natural resources from an unknown experiment to a nationwide movement.

Gifford Pinchot became head of the Division of Forestry in 1898 and under President Theodore Roosevelt was named Chief Forester of the redefined U.S. Forest Service. National forest management was guided by Pinchot's principle, "the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run." His magnetic personal leadership inspired a rare esprit de corps in the new organization. During his tenure of service to the government, the number of national forests increased from 32 in 1898 to 149 in 1910 for a total of 193 million acres.

Pinchot and Roosevelt together made conservation public issue and national policy. Roosevelt considered the enactment of a conservation program his greatest contribution to American domestic policy. In speaking of Gifford Pinchot's role:

*" . . . among the many, many public officials who under my administration rendered literally invaluable service to the people of the United States, Gifford Pinchot on the whole, stood first."*

Theodore Roosevelt



## Pinchots in Politics

Pinchot was elected to his first term as Governor of Pennsylvania in 1922 and is widely regarded as one of Pennsylvania's most progressive popular and effective chief executives. Within two years of his first term, the \$30 million deficit that had existed at the outset of Pinchot's governorship was eliminated.

In 1931 he began his second term as Pennsylvania's governor. During this administration Pinchot battled for the regulation of public utilities, relief for the unemployed, and construction of paved roads to "get the farmers out of the mud."

### EVERYBODY KNOWS



**GIFFORD PINCHOT**  
REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE  
**MADE A GOOD GOVERNOR**  
HELP HIM FINISH HIS WORK  
PRIMARY ELECTION MAY 2, 1930

### CORNELIA BRYCE PINCHOT

Will Really Represent the People  
of This District



Republican Candidate for Representative in Congress

DRY AND PROGRESSIVE

**Primary Election April 24, 1928**

Cornelia Bryce was married to Gifford Pinchot in 1914. The daughter of journalist and politician Lloyd Bryce, Cornelia grew to maturity in the shadow of Theodore Roosevelt's political circle. It was during the Bull Moose campaign of 1912 that she was introduced to Gifford by Theodore Roosevelt.

During the 1920's Cornelia ran for the House of Representatives on three occasions and in 1930 entered the gubernatorial primaries for Pennsylvania. During these campaigns she focused considerable attention on the labor rights of women and children. One commented that Cornelia "was equally at home on a picket line with striking workers as she was a gracious hostess at a formal reception."





## Current Ownership and Administration

The Forest Service now administers and maintains Grey Towers and 102 acres of grounds that includes formal gardens, expansive lawns and woodlands. The present holdings were conveyed to the Forest Service by Pinchot's heirs in 1963.

Dedication ceremonies for the Pinchot Institute for Conservation Studies which marked a new era in Pinchot conservation were held on the grounds on September 24, 1963. President John F. Kennedy was the principal speaker. For Kennedy it was the first stop on a conservation tour of America. He referred to this trip as a "journey to save America's natural heritage—a journey to preserve the past and protect the future."

The journey continues. In 1983 the National Friends of Grey Towers, a private non-profit educational foundation, was established to assist the Forest Service in its mission to preserve, protect, restore and interpret the historic estate and to promote public understanding of conservation through programs of the Pinchot Institute for Conservation Studies.



Grey Towers is located on U.S. Route 6, 2 miles east of I-84, Exit 10, in Milford, PA.



### Tour Schedule

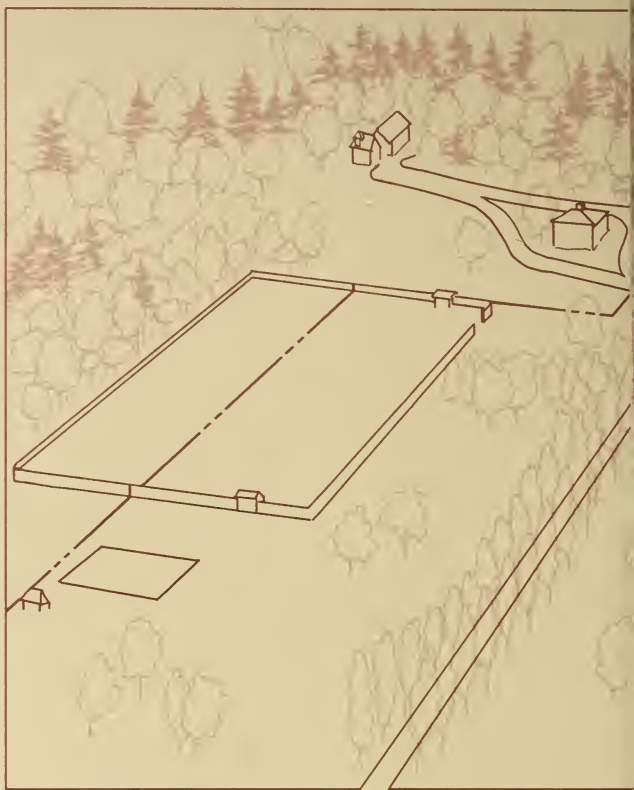
Summer: Memorial Day—Labor Day, daily, 10-4  
Fall: Labor Day—October 23, daily, 1-4  
October 24—December 31, Mon-Fri, 1-4  
Winter: January, February, March, call for appointment  
Spring: April 1—Memorial Day, Mon-Fri, 1-4

Gates close after the 4:00 tour. All vehicles must be off the site by 5:00 P.M.

Grey Towers National Historic Landmark  
U.S. Forest Service  
P.O. Box 188  
Milford, PA 18337

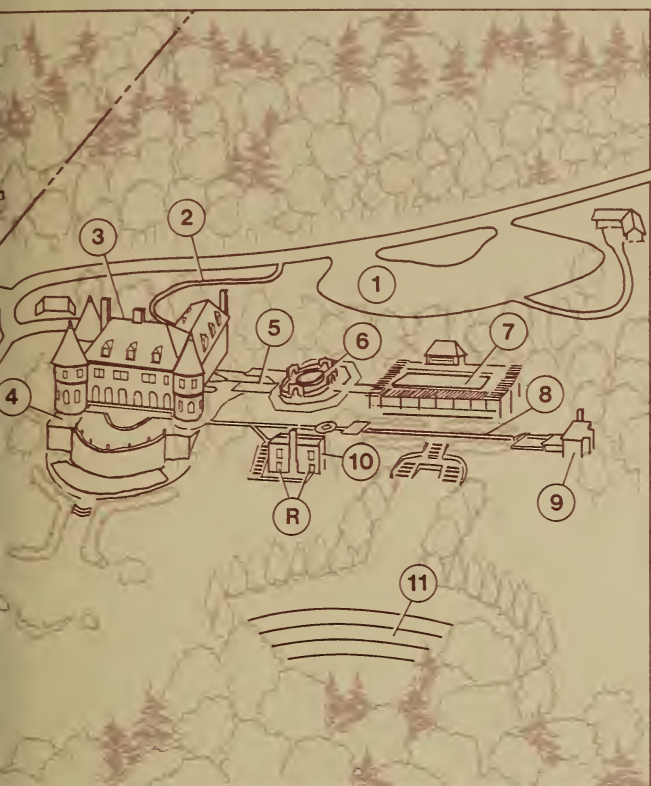
Telephone: (717) 296-6401





## LEGEND

- |    |                      |
|----|----------------------|
| 1  | Parking lot          |
| 2  | Steps to parking lot |
| 3  | Main House           |
| 4  | Tour begins here     |
| 5  | Patio                |
| 6  | Finger Bowl          |
| 7  | Pool                 |
| 8  | Reflecting Pool      |
| 9  | Bait Box             |
| 10 | Letter Box           |
| 11 | Amphitheater         |
| R  | Restrooms            |



## For Your Safety

Efforts have been made to provide for your safety. Stone walkways, however, are historic and therefore may be unsteady. Comfortable footwear is suggested. Please take care to have a safe and enjoyable visit.

## Donation

Restoration work at Grey Towers depends on monies donated by the visiting public. The National Friends of Grey Towers seeks your support in this effort and requests a modest donation for the tour of the house and gardens. Tickets can be obtained in the gallery, gift shop, or from a Tour Guide. Children under 12 are free.

Groups of twenty or more are requested to call ahead for special reservations.

